

Santa Margarita Low Impact Development Project
Description
San Luis Obispo County

DESCRIPTION: A proposal by the County of San Luis Obispo to install an earthen berm to increase wetland habitat and detain peak storm flows south of the community of Santa Margarita and to construct bioswales along Murphy Avenue and F Street. Funding for this project has been provided in part through an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board under the Proposition 40 Urban Stormwater Grant Program. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the State Water Resources Control Board, nor does any mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

The project will improve stormwater quality and flood protection in Santa Margarita as well as function as a Low Impact Development (LID) demonstration site for the region. The project will demonstrate the application of wetlands and bioswales for post-construction stormwater management.

The wetland enhancement portion of the project will be constructed south of the community, on the Santa Margarita Ranch. An earthen berm will be constructed across an existing seasonal wetland to detain and meter upland flows to enhance the wetland ecosystem and reduce flooding downstream. Increasing periods of inundation in the wetland will allow a greater variety of wetland plants to grow and will provide seasonal habitat for native fauna. The berm will be a maximum of 10 feet tall, approximately 750 feet long, and will have a 5:1 slope. The soil used to construct the berm will be obtained by excavating around the seasonal wetland, creating more low-lying areas to become wetland (4.25 acres of borrow).

The bioswales will be constructed along both sides of the entire length of Murphy Avenue and along one or both sides of F Street, from Murphy Avenue northeast to Yerba Buena Creek. The bioswales will add both conveyance capacity and water quality treatment before discharging to Yerba Buena Creek. The bioswales will add aesthetic appeal to the existing streetscape. The bioswales will be up to 2,000 feet long, and will require the disturbance of an approximately 12,000 square foot area that currently exists as roadside ditches within the public right of way.

The total project will result in the disturbance of an approximate 248,804 (5.71 ac) square foot area. All disturbed soils will be revegetated with native plant species. The proposed project is within the Agricultural, Residential Single Family, and Commercial Retail land use categories and is located south of the southern terminus of Maria Avenue (wetland) and along Murphy Avenue and F Streets (bioswales) in the community of Santa Margarita. The site is in the Salinas River planning area.